

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SS-20 NSC-10 STR-08 H-03 PA-04

PRS-01 USIA-15 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SPC-03 CIEP-02

LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 TAR-02 DRC-01 /177 W

----- 041500

R 042215Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5681

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAN JOSE 4276

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, CS, PN

SUBJECT: SUGAR: SHIPMENTS TO U.S. IN 1974 BY COSTA RICA AND
PANAMA

REF: STATE 234499

1. AGATT HELD DISCUSSIONS IN COSTA RICA WITH EXECUTIVE SECRETARY LIGA-AGRICOLA INDUSTRIAL DE LA CANA DE AZUCAR WHICH IS QUASI-GOVERNMENTAL BOARD THAT CONTROLS LOCAL MARKETING AND IS SOLE EXPORTER OF SUGAR. HE ESTIMATED 1974 EXPORT AVAILABILITY AT 120,000 SHORT TONS AND INDICATED DESIRE TO SELL ALL TO U.S. MARKET IF QUOTA AVAILABLE AND AVAILABLE WITH SUFFICIENT ADVANCED NOTICE. HE COMMENTED THAT LIGA UNABLE TO OFFER UNDER NOVEMBER 27 ANNOUNCEMENT AS SOLD-OUT OF OLD CROP SUGAR AND NEW CROP WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE IN TIME TO MEET DEADLINE. HE INDICATED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR U.S. MARKET AND EXPLAINED SALES WERE MADE TO WORLD MARKET AROUND MID-YEAR 1973 SINCE SURPLUS EXISTED AT THAT TIME OVER AND ABOVE U.S. QUOTA AND LIGA NEEDED REVENUE IN ORDER TO PAY PROCESSORS. HE WAS UNABLE TO ANTICIPATE MONTHLY SHIPMENTS AS TOO MANY

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VARIABLES INCLUDING EVENTUAL U.S. QUOTA AND FREIGHT.

FOR WORKING PURPOSES, HE SAID TO USE 1973 PATTERN.
AS U.S. QUOTA NOW 81,952 SHORT TONS, UNCOMMITTED
SUGAR ABOVE QUOTA IS APPROXIMATELY 40,000 TONS.

2. COMMENT: INDICATION IS THAT LIGA MIGHT BE
WILLING TO HOLD UNCOMMITTED SUGAR OFF WORLD MARKET WITH
ASSURANCES THAT U.S. QUOTA WILL BE INCREASED. SOME
INDICATIONS IN PRESS THAT SUGAR MAY BE SOLD OR BARTERED
WITH OTHER CENTRAL AMERICA COUNTRIES, BUT WE
WOULD NOT EXPECT QUANTITY TO BE SIGNIFICANT. ABOVE
ESTIMATE OF EXPORT AVAILABILITY SLIGHTLY EXCEEDS LATEST
MADE BY OFFICE AGATT (CR3021), BUT WOULD NOT ARGUE WITH IT.

3. RECENTLY AGATT IN PANAMA AND TRADE THERE
ESTIMATED 1974 EXPORT AVAILABILITY ABOUT EQUAL TO U.S.
QUOTA OF 76,605 TONS. ALL EXPORTS FROM PANAMA MADE BY
2 PRIVATE MILLS AND BOTH INDICATED DESIRE TO SELL ONLY TO
U.S. MARKET IN 1974 AS HAS BEEN PRACTICE IN THE PAST.
MONTHLY SHIPMENTS HARDER TO ESTIMATE AS DEPTH SUGAR
PORT LIMITS SHIPMENTS TO VERY SMALL VESSELS - 1,000 TO
2,500 TONS. TRADE INDICATED SHARP RISE IN
FREIGHT COSTS AND DIFFICULTY IN ARRANGING FREIGHT. WE
SUGGEST USING 1973 PATTERN FOR ESTIMATING 1974 RECEIPTS
BY MONTHS.
VAKY

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